

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-11. (Cancelled)

12. (New) A method of forming a FDIC insured banking structure that utilizes a multi-class layered limited liability organization having a pass through tax status and in such a manner as to enable profits and losses to pass through to owners under a partnership scheme and while at the same time enabling banking customers to become profit sharing members that also participate in ownership and management of the banking structure, the method comprising:

organizing a bank holding company that is designated as a limited liability company;

organizing at least one franchise bank which is FDIC insured and organized as a limited liability company and which is wholly owned and managed by the bank holding company, the at least one franchise bank being organized in such a manner as to provide banking services to customers comprising franchise bank members, wherein profit sharing distributions are made to the franchise bank members and wherein at least some of the franchise bank members are enabled to participate in management of the at least one franchise bank; and

organizing a chartered bank which is FDIC insured and organized as a limited liability company and which is wholly owned and managed by the bank holding company, the chartered bank being organized in such a manner as to provide charter services to the at least one franchise bank and to provide an interface between the at least one franchise bank and the bank holding company.

13. (New) The method recited in claim 12, wherein the bank holding company provides services to the at least one franchise bank, the services provided including at least one of:

- loan sourcing services,
- marketing services,
- mortgage services,
- insurance services,
- property management services,
- equipment leasing services,
- mutual fund management services, or
- consulting services.

14. (New) The method recited in claim 13, wherein the services provided include:

- the loan sourcing services,
- the marketing services,
- the mortgage services,
- the insurance services,
- the property management services,
- the equipment leasing services,
- the mutual fund management services, and
- the consulting services.

15. (New) The method recited in claim 12, wherein the charter services provided to the at least one franchise bank include:

- consolidating bank accounting information for the at least one franchise bank;
- reporting to regulatory agencies for the at least one franchise bank;
- providing a template defining a look and feel for the at least one franchise bank;
- providing marketing and advertising services, human resource management, audit support, payroll services, legal and accounting support to the at least one franchise bank;
- and
- providing hardware and software to the at least one franchise bank.

16. (New) The method recited in claim 15, wherein the template defines a strict timeline for the following:

- start-up of the at least one franchise bank,
- completion of initial capital requirements,
- selection of management of the franchise bank,
- completion of regulatory applications,
- selection of bank location, and
- setup of bank infrastructure and formation of goals.

17. (New) The method recited in claim 12, wherein the franchise bank members include preferred members as well as other members, wherein the preferred members are members having minimum account balances with the at least one franchise bank and that receive preferred rates and distributions of earnings based on a formula of deposits and other banking use or activities at least one franchise bank, and wherein the other members receive a nominal distribution of earnings based on earnings of the at least one franchise bank.

18. (New) The method recited in claim 12, wherein organizing the bank holding company includes organizing a multi-member board of managers, including management members, founding members and investment members, wherein the investment members provide capital in the form of assets, the management members providing management services to the bank holding company in the form of knowledge and experience, and the founding members providing capital and investment into one or more of the at least one franchise banks.

19. (New) The method recited in claim 18, wherein the assets comprise liquid assets.

20. (New) The method recited in claim 18, wherein organizing the bank holding company further includes establishing a board of directors comprising at least seven members.

21. (New) The method recited in claim 20, wherein the board of directors consists of seven members.

22. (New) The method recited in claim 12, wherein organizing the at least one franchise bank includes establishing an advisory board of at least seven individuals with a majority of the advisory board comprising managing members selected from a group consisting of one or more founding members, one or more representatives of the bank holding company and one or more representatives of the charter bank.

23. (New) The method recited in claim 22, wherein the advisory board consists of seven individuals, the seven individuals consisting of three founding members, one representative of the bank holding company, one representative of the charter bank and two franchise bank members.

24. (New) The method recited in claim 12, wherein the method further includes:
designating at least one management member who contributes capital and engages in management of the bank holding company and the at least one franchise bank;
designating at least one founding member who contributes capital to the bank holding company; and
designating at least one investment member who contributes capital to the bank holding company and makes deposits into an account at the at least one franchise bank.

25. (New) The method recited in claim 12, wherein the at least one franchise bank further comprises at least one franchise founding member who is designated to contribute capital to the bank holding company, to elect board members to the franchise bank, and to vote to distribute profits from the franchise bank.

26. (New) The method recited in claim 12, wherein the at least one franchise bank is designed to accept and service from at least one business member and at least one individual member who are both designated to receive yearly distributions of profits of the at least one franchise bank.

27. (New) The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the at least one franchise bank includes at least two franchise banks located in distinct locales.